

MISS NUTTING.—I will call upon Miss Isabel McIsaac, of the Illinois Training-School, to respond to this address.

Miss McIsaac responded as follows:

“MADAM PRESIDENT, LADIES: I feel that it is a distinctive honor as well as a pleasure to be asked to respond in behalf of the American Federation of Nurses to the cordial greetings that we have received from Washington, both from the nurses and the citizens. I think I may say without danger of giving offence to our hosts of previous occasions that in no city has there been such a lively interest and pleasure exhibited in anticipation as there has been for this meeting in Washington, and certainly our anticipations have been fully realized if the members present are any evidence. We feel very glad to enroll ourselves among that long list of organizations which so many years ago gave this delightful city the name of ‘The Convention City,’ and I trust that this first meeting of the American Federation of Nurses, which has so fittingly taken place at the seat of the government of the nation, shall be an omen for its future, because the American Federation of Nurses up to this time has simply been a name, and we need that it shall be something besides a name. The two great associations, the Superintendents’ and the Alumnae, have widely diversified aims, but we have many aims in common, and if the old saying that the boy is the father of the man is a true one, then I think that the pupil nurse is the mother of the superintendent of nurses. Again I would voice the sentiment of the Federation of Nurses in giving thanks to the graduate nurses and to their friends and to Washington for this very cordial greeting and warm hospitality.”

Miss M. A. Nutting addressed the Federation as follows:

#### ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

“MY FELLOW-WORKERS: This meeting is one of much significance. It is the first formal gathering together of our two important nursing societies to consider the purposes for which we are federated, and to determine our powers and responsibilities in that relationship.

“This Federation, entered into some years ago, unites the great body of graduate nurses, known as the Associated Alumnae, in whom we see represented by delegates here to-day nearly one hundred of the alumnae associations of the best schools of our country, and behind them standing an army of over seven thousand nurses, and the older and smaller body, the superintendents and the teachers.

“There is a peculiar interest about this gathering to one who, at a convention of superintendents held in Philadelphia in 1896, listened to the story of how such a national association of nurses as this might be

formed, and of what useful service to the profession and to the community it might render. I was that listener, and the story was told by one whom you all know well, Miss Dock, and though I admit at the time the founding of such a national society seemed to me rather a far-away vision, I had the pleasure of moving the appointment of the committee which took the first steps towards your organization. In the following year the constitution of this society was framed and adopted, and your first president was elected in the Training-School of the hospital to which I belong, and I have a further peculiar interest because that first president, to whom you so wisely entrusted the difficult and delicate task of early organization, was my teacher, the former superintendent of our school, Isabel Hampton Robb. It is fitting here at this moment to say, in recognition of Mrs. Robb's work, that she has been a powerful, guiding, shaping influence in the nursing profession from the day she entered it—that both of these societies here united to-day owe an eternal debt of gratitude for the splendid labor which she has given and still gives to nursing affairs and interests.

“So it is not to-day as if two strange, unrelated societies were trying to find ground on which to unite, for the younger and larger society is the direct outcome of the interest and effort of the older, and, still more, it is composed of the graduates of the schools which are under their direction. Its growth and tendencies are as anxiously watched as are those of the daughters of any great household. The Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools for Nurses has just completed its eleventh year with a roll of two hundred and fifty members. It has an honorable record of work undertaken and accomplished for the benefit of training-schools and of the profession, and it has before it many problems which will take all the combined wisdom and experience of its members to solve. The educational system of training-schools for nurses is undergoing a complete transformation, and never did any profession need more leaders who are not carried about by every new wind of doctrine, but women of judgment, stability, and foresight, or, rather, of that prophetic insight into further possibilities which marks those greater than their fellows. To the younger body I would say, we have much to consider; we are not yet adjusted to the needs of the public. The criticisms of us as members of a profession are constant, severe, and searching. We claim, and I think justly, the status of a profession; we have schools and teachers, tuition fees and scholarships, systems of instruction from preparatory to post-graduate; we are allied with technical schools on the one hand, and here and there a university on the other; we have libraries, a literature, and fast-growing numbers of periodicals owned, edited, and published by nurses; we have societies and laws. If, therefore, we claim to receive the

appurtenances, privileges, and standing of a profession, we must recognize professional responsibilities and obligations which we are in honor bound to respect and uphold. We cannot proceed comfortably to adjust our lives according to our own petty personal views; we have to think of ourselves each as one of a vast body, and know that we each contribute to the credit or discredit of that body. There are many of our affairs in which the public are most directly and vitally concerned which need our earnest and thoughtful attention. We need to apply unsparing self-scrutiny. With the deepest possible affection and sympathy, let me say that the discontent with trained nurses in private households is wide and deep and constant, and that we have a work before us to hold the confidence of the public, to find out what that trouble is and how to remedy it? No profession ever rose to a high position more rapidly than nursing. Much of the admiration which we have received has been deserved, and it would be a calamity indeed if we have through the weaknesses or selfishness of any one of us injured its fair fame. We need to keep in constant use our professional ethics, or, I should say, the ethics of Christianity. When the public says plainly that we fail to guard sacredly the private matters of the households we enter, but discuss them among ourselves and pass them on to subsequent patients; when it says that our system of payments makes practically a labor union, and that no human distress or need is sufficient to make us ready either to alter our charges or give freely something of skill and knowledge; when it says loudly and repeatedly that we are wasteful in people's households to the verge of dishonesty of every article in common use,—there is something wrong, and the sooner we get it right the better. No one of us stands alone; we are related to others in every action of our lives, and in that relationship the power of things, good or evil, lies in our hands. We can help to make the world better or worse. Every one of us leaves the world definitely altered because of our acts. The one thing we cannot do is to do nothing. When Florence Nightingale entered a little school at Kaiserswerth sixty years ago it was an act which profoundly affected every one of us here to-day, many thousands of women before us, and many thousands who will follow. Training-schools are in existence because of her work, and alumnae follow the school. When Mr. Rathborne supplied the first district nurse to a poor section of the city of Liverpool he affected the lives of many, many nurses, and set in motion a system of work which is fast becoming one of the greatest and best humanitarian agencies. When some years ago Honnor Morten got permission with difficulty to place a nurse in the public schools of London, do you think she had any imaginings that the impulse of her efforts would in a few years extend into the public schools of the city of New York? There is nothing more eternally true than that no man liveth to himself.

"I congratulate you, fellow-workers, on all that has been accomplished for and by nurses, and I welcome you to a consideration of the matters which will come before you to-day and in the following days, praying that we may bring to them the spirit of justice, truth, and humility. We are blessed beyond many other women in being given the chance to work, and I would say here that of all the evils that I know to-day, idleness is one of those most to be feared and dreaded in its effects upon human character. Burton gives it credit as the great cause of melancholy and other diseases, "As ferns grow in an untilled ground, and all manner of weeds, so do gross humours in an idle body." He adds, "An idle dog will be mangy, and how can an idle person think to escape?" We have not only work, but work of a noble and uplifting kind. In a very beautiful address given to the Society of Superintendents on Monday President Needham concluded by saying, "I welcome you to the aristocracy of labor, to the nobility of knowledge." This morning we will be asked to extend our fellowship and join hands in some permanent way with our struggling sisters across the water, and remembering what has just been shown, what we owe English nurses for inspiration and example, any help which we of larger liberties can give will be freely and gladly extended. As a Federation we shall meet together seldom, but these meetings should always be of much moment, and as the presiding officer of this organization let me, in welcoming you, wish you God-speed. I declare this meeting open for work."

## THE EFFECT OF STATE REGISTRATION UPON TRAINING-SCHOOLS

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"It has been somewhat difficult in preparing this paper upon the subject of the 'Effect of State Registration Upon Training-Schools' to obtain definite facts. The time is too soon for great results, and I have not been able to give the time to the investigation that the subject needed, nor have I received that cordial coöperation from all of the superintendents to whom I have appealed for assistance that I hoped for, but such statements as I make are based upon knowledge that has been gained either through my experience as a member of the Board of Examiners of New York State, or from information received from women who are actively engaged in State work.

"On broad general principles the effect of the State registration movement has been to stimulate training-schools almost universally,